



# MEDIA RELEASE

STATE OF TENNESSEE  
DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION

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## AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION PUBLICATION LABELS TENNCARE DENTAL PROGRAM 'A RESOUNDING SUCCESS'

ARTICLE HIGHLIGHTS SUCCESS OF DENTAL CARVE OUT,  
USE OF SINGLE DENTAL BENEFITS MANAGER

NASHVILLE, Tenn. –The upcoming edition of the American Dental Association's (ADA) national publication, *ADA News*, includes a profile of the TennCare dental program, calling it, "a model for other state to follow" in their Medicaid dental programs.

Dr. Jackson Brown, associate executive director for the ADA Health Policy Resources Center, is quoted in the June 7 edition, calling the TennCare dental program a, "resounding success" that "has markedly improved access to dental care among the state's low-income children and dramatically increased participation by Tennessee dentists."

ADA President, Dr. Eugene Sekiguchi, states in the article, "The TennCare model is an example of how to do things right."

The TennCare Bureau, on October 1, 2002, moved the administration of TennCare dental services from 10 managed care organizations to a single dental benefit manager (DBM), Doral Dental USA. The state is half way through it's initial three year contract period with Doral Dental to operate the "carve out" on behalf of the state. As the DBM for TennCare, Doral is responsible for maintaining an adequate dental provider network, paying provider claims and providing member and outreach services.

In the ADA article, Dr. Brown attributes the success of the carve out to the state's satisfaction of economic and business principles. "The foundation of its success rests on basic economic and business principles: pay a fair fee for services provided and run the program efficiently so using and providing dental services are no longer a hassle."

Improvements cited in the article include:

- **Dental provider network has grown 80 percent.** Approximately 380 dental providers were in the TennCare dental network prior to the carve out. The dental provider network currently includes more than 700 providers.
- An estimated 25 percent of dentists practicing in Tennessee actively participate in the TennCare program.
- **86 percent of participating dentists currently accept new TennCare patients into their practice.** The large number of dentists accepting patients indicates adequate capacity in the existing provider network.

(more)

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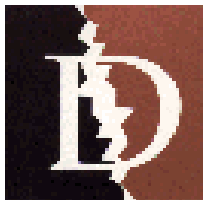
- Average distance from an enrollee to a participating TennCare dental provider is approximately four miles.
- More than 600,000 children under age 21 have access to dental care through TennCare.

“The result of these efforts is an improved system of delivery of dental services to TennCare enrollees, especially children,” said Manny Martins, Deputy Commissioner and Director of the TennCare Bureau. “The improvements in the TennCare dental program over the past two years are a direct result of the cooperative efforts of the TennCare Bureau, Tennessee Dental Association, Pan Tennessee Dental Association, the private dental community, and public health departments operated by the Department of Health,”

The ADA News story can be found online at <http://www.ada.org/prof/resources/pubs/adanews/current.asp>. Doral Dental’s first year summary of the dental carve out, and a copy of this news release, can be found online at <http://www.tennessee.gov/tenncare/adanr.pdf>

TennCare is Tennessee’s managed care insurance program for 1.3 million people who are poor, disabled or uninsured.

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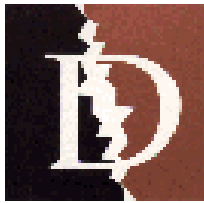
Doral Dental of Tennessee, LLC  
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## **WORKING TO IMPROVE THE TENNCARE DENTAL PROGRAM**

### **YEAR ONE REPORT**

**October 1, 2002 through  
September 30, 2003**



**Doral Dental of Tennessee**

*A subsidiary of Doral Dental USA*



October 2003

## **The TennCare Dental Program – Year One Report**

We are pleased to have the opportunity to report on the success that The Bureau of TennCare and Doral Dental of Tennessee (Doral) have had in working together to improve access to, utilization of and overall quality of dental services available to TennCare members during the first year of Doral's administration contract with the State of Tennessee.

Recognizing and responding to the challenges government dental programs present, Doral has developed proprietary processes and technology to lower administrative costs and improve service to health plans and public agencies, dental providers and Medicaid / CHIP members.

When Doral assumed administrative duties in Tennessee on October 1, 2002, the TennCare dental program faced a number of challenges. Dental provider participation and member utilization were both lower than desired. Working with multiple MCOs, each with different procedures and reimbursements, was cumbersome for Tennessee dentists.

One year later, we are pleased to report that working together, The Bureau of TennCare, Doral and organized dentistry (TDA, PTDA) have created an efficient, effective program that we feel is on the road to becoming one of the nation's most successful. Among the accomplishments:

## General Administration

- **Smooth transition and rapid program setup:** Doral set up operations to take over administration of the entire TennCare program in just a few months. Doral's expert transition team assured that there was no interruption in service to TennCare members.
- **Administrative excellence:** Doral's administrative efficiencies have been instrumental in attracting providers to participate in the TennCare Program.
- **Continuous flow of provider payments:** Doral has a strong record of timely payments to participating providers in Tennessee – with greater than 99% accuracy.
- **Strong relationships with organized dentistry:** TennCare and Doral have built a positive relationship with the Tennessee Dental Association (TDA), the Pan Tennessee Dental Association (PTDA) and local dental societies, working with them on a number of initiatives including outreach and professional education programs.
- **Ensuring quality dental care:** Doral emphasizes quality care by ensuring that all participating dentists meet high quality standards. Doral's credentialing process adheres to Nationally-recognized Quality Assurance guidelines as they apply to dentistry. Doral uses proprietary software to monitor claims for trends and aberrations that may indicate quality issues. Significant deviations in normal practice patterns will be followed by record audit and use of second opinions as deemed necessary. Quality issues identified through the Utilization Review Process will be addressed through issuance of corrective action plans.
- **Effective management and monitoring of billing practices:** The data collected through Doral's proprietary software permits effective monitoring of claims for fraud, waste and abuse. Doral's vast experience in 18 states has helped develop an elaborate series of 135 system edits to run claims through. The system rebundles codes if necessary and analyzes claims for trends and aberrations that are indicators of billing fraud, waste and abuse. In the first year, Doral has saved the State of Tennessee hundreds of thousands of dollars by carefully monitoring claims for billing irregularities.

## **Provider Benefits**

- **Enhanced provider services:** Doral has dedicated staff to provide outreach to Tennessee dentists, providing assistance in program enrollment and responding quickly and completely to inquiries about billing and policy issues. In addition, our provider staff responds promptly to requests for assistance with technology and other practice management issues.
- **Improved member eligibility and verification systems:** Doral has developed web-based member eligibility and patient scheduling systems, offered to providers to further streamline administration of the program. Providers have 24-hour access to member eligibility and patient scheduling information via a secure website and an interactive voice response telephone system (IVR).
- **Accurate claims:** Doral takes pride in the ability to provide highly accurate claims processing services to the TennCare program. In year one, claims accuracy has been greater than 99%. Doral's website is specifically designed to ensure that providers submit accurate, complete, electronic claims.
- **Expanded options and use of electronic claims:** Doral currently accepts electronic claims through clearinghouses, flat files from the provider's own billing system or free of charge through Doral's website. Providers may use Doral's Internet-based system for claims submission, as well as eligibility verification and patient scheduling. Doral also receives x-rays and orthodontic models electronically through its partnerships with National Electronic Attachments and OrthoCad. **In excess of 45 percent of all TennCare dental claims are now filed electronically, reducing practice costs and increasing the efficiency of claims processing.**
- **CDT- 4 Conversion:** Doral converted the TennCare program to new ADA approved CDT-4 coding.

## **Provider Benefits (continued)**

- **Timely claims payment:** Doral has exceeded contractual requirements regarding claims payments.
- **Streamlined preauthorization process:** Doral worked with TennCare to remove preauthorization requirements on commonly provided procedures.
- **Introduction of comprehensive TennCare billing and training manual:** Doral has assembled a comprehensive TennCare billing and training manual for dental offices. The consolidation of administration with one organization along with this document enables new providers to quickly grasp the regulations, policies and procedures involved in the TennCare program.
- **Participation in professional education:** Doral has conducted seminars on practice management topics, and participated in provider training in conjunction with the TDA.
- **Regular provider communications:** Doral staff members have written and published articles in TDA publications, explaining Doral policies and procedures, as well as new developments or changes in the TennCare program. Doral also provides Practice Management Tips in check mailings, and regularly corresponds with providers on changes in policies and procedures via the “Doral Digest” provider newsletter.
- **Establishment of local peer review process:** Doral has found dental peer advisory panels to be instrumental in creating alliances with the dental community and providing the most widely accepted program approach. Provider involvement in decision-making regarding: quality of care, sanctions, benefit interpretation and utilization management is a key component to building commitment by dentists in the program.

## **Member Benefits**

- **Expanded provider network:** Only 386 dentists were part of the TennCare panel of providers when Doral assumed administration of the program one year ago. A number of those providers were not actively treating patients. With the support of the TDA and Pan TDA, Doral undertook an aggressive network building campaign. **Today, nearly 700 dentists actively treat TennCare members, an increase of more than 81 percent!**
- **Increased member access:** The dramatic growth in the provider panel during the first year of the Doral-administered program has translated into a similar increase the access rate for TennCare members. Prior to October 1, 2002, the aggregate access percentage as reported by TennCare was 36 percent. **The first year of the carve out, the percentage was 46 percent, which represents a 28 percent increase over the previous year.**
- **Accurate provider referrals / member placement:** Using proprietary technology, members are able to locate any general dentist or specialist within any area of Tennessee 24 hours a day through Doral's interactive voice response system (IVR). A Geo-Access mapping program enables customer service representatives to link member zip codes with the closest dentist accepting TennCare referrals. Doral has successfully placed every eligible TennCare member who contacted them for dental service.
- **Improved member communication / education:** Doral has worked to increase the "Dental IQ" of TennCare members through the development and distribution of a member handbook and quarterly member newsletters. In addition, Doral offers a wide variety of TennCare specific oral health education material to dentists, physicians and local health departments for download free of charge via the Doral website.
- **Improved customer service:** Members can speak to a customer service representative nine hours a day, five days a week. When a customer service representative is not available, members can locate a dentist using the IVR system or they may leave a message. All calls are guaranteed to be returned within 24 hours.



## **Reporting and Data Management**

- **Effective data entry and analysis:** Doral's leading-edge claims system maintains direct referential links to eligibility, benefits, claim history, provider affiliation, and member service information. This information is incorporated in the various edits that occur in the entering and processing of dental claims. Doral's software ensures that dentists provide accurate and complete claims information and this, in turn, ensures timely processing and payment of fees. Data input through our software results in nearly 100% error-free data.
- **Timely, detailed reports:** Doral has met and exceeded TennCare reporting parameters and deadlines. Doral maintains a Client Information Services group with specialists available to compile ad hoc reports relating to claims utilization, trend analysis, and recipient demographic analysis. Also available are provider panel reports and analysis studies, GeoAccess analyses, as well as a wide variety of specialized reports. Doral has a great deal of experience in dealing with the various survey requests, data analysis projects, and unique or specialized data extract requirements of various state agencies.
- **Implementation of the Doral Business Information System (DBIS):** Doral has gone far beyond basic reporting requirements by providing the State with its database management system called Doral Business Intelligence System (DBIS). This state-of-the-art information manager has allowed TennCare direct access to data such as provider information and member utilization data to create its own ad-hoc reports in real time. DBIS is a highly sophisticated, yet very user-friendly data management program. By utilizing statewide dental program information provided by Doral through daily feeds, the State has up-to-the-minute data to produce per member per month cost analyses, trend reports, provider profiling, and many other integral reports for evaluating the dental program. No other administrator could provide the State with such a valuable data management tool.

## **Outreach Initiatives**

- **Collaboration with community groups:** Doral is working cooperatively with a wide variety of Tennessee community-based organizations including:

- National Healthcare for the Homeless Coalition
- Nashville Taskforce on Immigrants and Refugees
- TennCare for Children Shelter Enrollment Project
- Policymakers' Discussion on Children's Health
- South Central Head Start Advisory Board
- County Health Department Incredible Baby Showers
- Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth, Boys and Girls Clubs
- TennCare Advocacy Group
- Nashville Social Services Club
- Smoke-Free Nashville
- BlueCross BlueShield Member Advisory Panel
- Project Blossom

Doral has made visits to community agencies throughout the state to provide copies of Doral Member Educational materials and to serve as a resource for oral health services. Doral shared our Member Educational materials with over 400 agencies in all 95 counties in the state.

- **Participation in community events:** Doral participated in a variety of health events across the state, which were targeted for the TennCare population. Events focused on back-to-school celebrations, the international community, minority health, public housing children, expectant and new parents, and community crime safety awareness. Doral stressed good oral health habits by providing Member Educational materials as well as toothbrushes and dental floss to all attendees. Doral also sponsored and participated in professional conferences this year: Tennessee Conference on Social Welfare, Tennessee Public Health Association and the Rural Health Association of Tennessee.

## **Outreach Initiatives (continued)**

- **Collaboration with Primary Care Physicians:** Doral collaborated with Better Health Plans staff in the development of a “prescription” type notepad for TennCare primary care physicians to use during an EPSDT medical exam. The purpose of the pad was to “prescribe” the message that it was time for the child to visit the dentist. The distribution to the PCPs was aimed at closing the gap between medical and dental services by emphasizing oral health care as an important part of the child’s overall health and well-being. Doral enlisted the assistance of the Tennessee Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics and all MCOs for support of this initiative.
- **Collaboration with Child Care Centers:** Doral developed two oral health curricula that were offered to childcare staff serving lower socio-economic groups. “Super Smiles” is a program for pre-school age children that encourages the development of good oral health habits. “A Child’s Smile” is a program for adults that stresses the importance of good oral health care for children, brushing guidelines, healthy snacks, and helpful hints for a dental visit. Personal presentations were made to children and parents/caretakers at child care centers in Davidson County. Doral distributed toothbrushes, brush caps, dental floss and Member Educational materials to the attendees.
- **Department of Children Services Support:** Doral has worked closely with the Department of Children Services to ensure DCS children obtain a dental appointment within 21 days of entering state custody. A specific process has been developed and a member placement representative appointed to assist Tennessee DCS caseworkers and health coordinators in locating dental providers within 30 minutes of the children’s residence, scheduling dental appointments, guaranteeing continuity of care for children recently assigned to TennCare, confirming temporary eligibility, reviewing dental history, and assisting with payment inquiries. Doral team members recently participated in a training session with DCS health coordinators to review topics such as Doral’s policies and procedures, covered benefits, filing appeals, and how to locate a dentist. Plus, on an ongoing basis, Doral provides oral health information, updates and instruction via e-mail and conference calls with appropriate DCS staff.

## **Provider Testimonials**

The information in this report speaks for itself. But we believe our participating providers often do a much better job of assessing our performance:

*"In October 2002, Doral Dental became the administrator for the TennCare program... For the first time in my career, participating in this program is now acceptable. Doral has been very 'user friendly.' Doral Dental is easy to talk to, efficient in their operation and timely in making payments following treatment."*

**H. Pitts Hinson, DDS, MS**  
**Dentistry for Children, Lawrenceburg, P.C.**

*"Over the last few years, our office has been affiliated with several different companies that help us provide quality dental care to Tennessee's children. The one company that has literally 'bent over backward' for our office is Doral Dental. Most companies spend time dodging problems. Doral actually seeks solutions and tries to eliminate future problems. We really enjoy dealing with a company like Doral that cares for the welfare of children as much as our office does."*

**George A. Adams, DDS, MSD**

*"It has been a pleasure to work with the staff at Doral. Everyone – every single person that we have had to work with... has provided 'exceptional' customer service to us. The State of Tennessee made a good decision in selecting Doral to manage its dental program."*

**Simone Sheats, Managing Officer -- Sheats & Associates**

## **Conclusion**

**While the debate over how to manage spiraling healthcare costs continues to rage across America, Doral is clearly demonstrating that in Tennessee, appropriate administration of the TennCare Dental Program translates into increased access to high quality healthcare.**

***Thank you for allowing us to be your partner in improving the oral health of the people of Tennessee.***